



DEGRADATION OF MORAL AND ETHICAL VALUES AMONG INDIAN YOUTHS: AN EMERGING ISSUE

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ABSTRACT

Degradation of ethical and moral values in today's youth is a major issue in a developing country like India. The root of this issue is not a recent phenomena, its trace can be indented in the society of the past, the magnitude of which has spread over largely in recent days. The expression of this sort of degradation is being reflected in different undesirable aspects of the society. Values influence every aspect of human life, from speaking, wearing, discipline etc. The ways of reactions to different events, incidents and contexts is also depending on the moral and ethical values. They are considered as important and desirable attributes of one's character which are held in high esteem by the society in which a person lives. In essence, values determine our moral behaviour. Today's youth is the future of tomorrow. But now a day youth is adversely diverted through different immoral activities which not only affected the present Indian society but also ruined the future generation of our civilization. Therefore it is the duty of the society to protect the Indian youth so that they would refrain from these immoral activities and face challenges of life boldly and actively. This paper highlights the causes, consequences, importance and remedial measures to encounter the degradation of moral values among Indian youth.

KEYWORDS: Moral degradation, Indian youth, Ethical values.

INTRODUCTION:

The erosion of moral values in our society today has become a phenomenon. Morals are the acceptable standard of general conduct or behaviour when judged by an average person or the society at large. Morality plays a healthy synthesis between people, co-operate each other in a harmonic manner, understand the right or wrong differentiation makes a value based society. Morals are influenced by family, society, culture and social values etc. The agencies of education such as family, school, church and society play an important role in developing ethical and moral values among Indian youths. But unfortunately due to several social and economic factors many families are disoriented, disorganised and confused and failed to play this vital role. Our institutions of learning are preparing efficient individuals but not good citizens. Society today is marked by violence, greed, theft, drug addiction, terrorism etc. Discipline today is lacking among young children. They do not obey the elders and often disrespects them. Young generations today become so much self-centred that they are mostly busy in serving their own interests. Thus it has been commonly believed that there has been a rapid erosion of ethical and moral values among youths in Indian society.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The modern materialistic world raises our standard of living but declines our standard of life i.e. the value of life. On account of population explosion, knowledge explosion (science and technology) and material explosion man has started moving towards the wrong path by considering material comforts of the world as real happiness. In the present society due to the spread of greed, self-aggrandizement, gross injustice, abuse of human rights, pervasion of power, callousness, insensitivity, deceit, dishonesty, thefts, bribery, smuggling, corruption, exploitation man are wallowing in the low and dark dimensions of his consciousness. Religion and morality are being throttled and the power of man is being misused. The growing influence of the negative aspects of Western culture in younger generation is stranded on the crossroads. To make youth conscious about such evils education based on moral and ethical values should be provided to them so that they become rational human beings and to know what is good, love 'good' and do 'good'.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

Obj. 1: To know the importance of moral values among Indian youths.

Obj. 2: To know the causes of moral degradation among Indian youths.

Obj. 3: To know the consequences of moral degradation among Indian youths.

Obj. 4: To know the remedies to reduce the moral degradation among Indian youths.

METHODOLOGY:

This study is a qualitative in nature. Here the investigators collected the data from different research journals, books, websites etc.

FINDINGS:

According to the objectives of the study findings are discussed below:

Obj. 1: To know the importance of moral values among Indian youths.

Students are the future of India. The future of our country depends upon the moral values imparted to them during their student life. Moral lessons should be properly implemented among students in school and colleges.

Moral value is very essential in these days for the all-round development of the youth. This is because the present day curriculum is full of technical data which consists of facts, figures, theories and laws, and it has no scope for youth to take part in the finer things of life. Education based on moral values develops the outlook of the boy and girl students by providing a new direction to their thinking which brings consciousness and awakening in them. This education thus prepares them to sacrifice their personal interest for the welfare of the society. Such an outlook enables them to lead a life of "simple living and high thinking".

Moral values such as humility, truthfulness, honesty, respect for elders, tolerance, courtesy, spirit of service and sacrifice, affection, sympathy, love and cooperation are necessary among the youth for proper character and personality development. It helps to develop democratic qualities such as dignity of individual, social and individual justice, brotherhood and equality among students for the success of democracy.

There are some conflicts between the traditional views and modern views in the name of caste, creed, religion, region, culture and customs. Such conflict affects the progress of the society. Hence it is necessary to eliminate the conflicts for the growth of the society. Education based on moral values inculcates the feeling of respecting others by teaching tolerance, peace, love and patience, cooperation, fellow feeling and secularism.

By imparting lessons on moral values to the students their instincts, emotions and sexual urges can be controlled. This leads to the development of both the individual and society. It also helps to develop positive and social attitudes by creating awareness among the younger generation about the ills of the society. Such an education enables them to raise their voice against dowry system, corruption, red-tapism, traditional religious rituals, trafficking of girls and superstition.

Education based on moral values gives inspiration that one should live for all and all should live for one. It encourages all the people of the world to adopt the policy of "Live and let live."

Obj. 2: To know the causes of moral degradation among Indian Youths.

Values are the principles, standards convictions and beliefs that people adopt as their guidelines in their daily activities. They are a set of consistent measures and behaviours that individuals choose to practice in the pursuit of doing what is right or what is expected of them by society. Today's youths have to face a lot of problems. There are violence, exploitation, corruption in public life, terrorism, political corruption are increasing day by day. Man has been transformed to a mechanical machine due to application of scientific and technological inventions which adds comforts to their life, resulting in degradation of the moral value system. Unethical practices are rapidly increasing and their impact is also becoming far-reaching.

Some of the other reasons which are responsible for degradation of ethical and moral values among Indian youths are mentioned below-

- (a) **Parental behaviours:** In today's society the role of parents is much important in developing the personality of the child. Parents are much more concerned about education of their children rather than teaching good moral values to them. Working parents fails to develop good discipline and manners among the children. Most of them are unaware about what their children do when they are not in home. Sometimes excess freedom to the youths engage them to involve in many undesirable activities like visiting night club, gambling, rocking, trafficking etc. Parents of today are failed to regulate the activities of their children, some parents are unable to cope with demands of their children which compelled them to pursue in immoral activities.
- (b) **Influence of mass media:** Undoubtedly TV, print media, internet blogs and websites, cinemas, role models (movie actors/actress) play an important role in honing and shaping the personality of the youth. Many medias, images, movies and games that not only neutralize violence but often glorify it. There is so much violence, vulgarity in all these entertainment avenues and if a majority of youth watches these, the impact of the same on the next generation can't be positive.
- (c) **Defective education system:** Our education system fails to impart moral and ethical values among today's youth for various reasons. Those are:
- In the Educational programmes only mental developments have been stressed. In the modern age, the aim of education is all round development of personality. In the present educational system, provision has been made for intellectual education by giving importance to intellectual development.
 - The modern youth receiving education are losing their idealism and living in spiritual vacuum. Moral values have no respect now. Man fails to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil. Highest respect is being placed on wealth and power. Religion has now become a private affair and stress is being laid on secularization of social relationships. Human relations are becoming impersonal and secondary.
 - Lack of academic syllabus related to human values and professional ethics. Student's focus have been changed from enhancing hidden talents or values to just make them eligible to earn well or professionally equipped. Now a day, children are educated but they are not aware of the ways of its practical application. Consequently students are unemployed & depressed as present education makes them job seeker not job maker.
 - Higher importance to materialistic achievement among school students.
 - Privatization of educational institutes is another major cause for decline in ethical values in education. Permission and recognition given by government to open self-financed private institutions have made the education to acquire the status of a marketable commodity, where educational institutes act as the traders and students are their customers. These institutions run various courses without basic infrastructure and qualified faculties. The teachers appointed in such institutes are paid low with no job security and are far away from the required teaching standards.
 - There is favouritism, partial treatment and biasness among teachers which creates a lot of chaos and confusion among peers.
 - Lack of extra co-curricular activities based on human values and professional ethics- There is a great importance of curricular & extra-curricular activity for the student's life. But now the scope of extra-curricular activities is been limited to only sports, literary competitions, Quizzes, few games, dance or musical events only. Morning meetings, prayers, literary works, discussions over social problems and other cultural activities have been disappeared. National festival are celebrated only for the sake of formality.
 - Peer group influence- Peer groups play a vital role in developing the concept of morality. But now a days this has a bad impact on today's youth. Students of schools and colleges are often brain washed by their peers and instead of listening to the parents and teachers they accept the views of their peers which lead them to indulge in immoral activities like bribery, dacoits, truancy, kidnapping, drug-abused etc.
- (d) **Value placed on the sex of the child:** It is very unfortunate that in India parents differentiate between their son and daughter. Sons are preferred to daughters in our society. Going to market alone, laughing in public places, wearing western clothes are considered disgraceful for girls but these are not equally applied for boys. This unnecessary freedom to boys make them think that they are superior and can do whatever they want.

(e) **Economic change:** The economy is moving at such a fast pace rewarding the materialistic and money minded. Socially undesirable goods, excesses in fashion are marketed skilfully to the gullible people. In the backdrop of such an unfavourable atmosphere it is not surprising that youngsters do not hold high standards and personal principles.

(f) **Desire of self exhibition:** Adolescence is a time period when youth begin to analyze issues, develop view points, rationalize, and question the status quo, rebel and struggle to develop a personality of their own. Desire of self exhibition often takes a youth towards crime and immoral behaviour like smoking, drinking, delivering abusing words, quarrelling, sex abuse etc.

(g) **Dirty politics:** Today's youth are captured by political parties which are using them for serving their own interests. There are students union in colleges and universities which make the students engaged more in unethical activities such as hitting teachers if they failed in examinations, making strikes for fulfilling their unnecessary demands resulting in deterioration of ethical and moral standards of the society.

Obj. 3: To know the consequences of moral degradation among Indian youths.

Kidnapping, armed robbery and crisis have become a serious matter in India today. Young men and women are kidnapped and sometimes murdered. Apart from kidnapping and murder other types of crimes that are common in Indian youths include street crimes such as pick-pocketing, stealing, armed robbery, burglary, house and store breaking, grievous harm and wounding, cheating and car snatching.

Many youths today are involved in gambling, bribery, and corruption and currency offences. There is human trafficking. The most devastating aspect of human trafficking is that some of the people are used for prostitution, pornography, crime and armed conflict, hazardous child labour and ultimately domestic servants.

House of worship and religious books have been desecrated in the most degrading fashion. The sick, the wounded and the old folks have been subjected to inhuman violence.

Friends have betrayed friends. The persons responsible for providing shelter have themselves abrogated their pledge for the protection of the people the forces responsible for maintaining law and order (Police, Army and the judicial Magistrates) have openly joined the communal riots. They have not only personally committed acts of violence, but have abetted, supported and guided the violent operations of their chosen factions.

The creative mind of youth diverted towards unsocial activities such as smoking in public place, misbehaving in class, drug addiction, misconduct in the household and juvenile delinquency to name a few. Social values are uprooted by commencing antisocial activities so regional movement, conflict, bias, enmity etc. take leading role over all down fall of the society.

The alarming percentage of criminality and antisocial behaviour increase in India with the change in social structure and individual motives. Invention of new modes of scam and frauds are being emerged which denotes that youth are tending to get more interested into easy way of attaining wealth, power and fame etc. giving least consideration to human values. It promotes identity crisis and relationship with individuals or group who already perceived the association as morally deficient.

Obj. 4: To know the remedies to reduce the moral degradation among Indian youths.

Some remedies to reduce the moral degradation among Indian youths are as follows:

- To be successful in life, important human qualities along with intellectual development should be the aim of value education. Value education is the positive effort towards bringing about a synthesis of different values in a human being. It is the teachers' role to foster human values through his teaching in the classroom and follow those values. To the youth of today, the classroom messages are love, safety, security, belonging and warmth.
- The government should legislate against media operators who publish indecent action in their publication. This is to ensure that only appropriate type of broadcasting will be televised and eventually reduces the stress of moral decay.
- Social values should clearly be distinguished from social conservatism and superstition. The purpose of education is not only limited to acquisition of abstract knowledge and blind socialisation. Through liberal education the old social values and norms should be judged in the light of new demands of life and society. Through the method of acceptance and rejection favourable attitude should be created in the minds of youth for new values and norms of life.

- (iv) Some changes should be made in the curriculum keeping in view the social, moral, cultural and national values. The subjects like history, geography, social science, language, literature and arts should be inculcated in the curriculum as they inculcate the values such as cooperation, unselfishness, desire to serve, truthfulness, hospitality, leadership qualities, social justice, sharing courage, faith in God and serving the poor.
- (v) The school assembly, and co curricular activities, the celebration of festivals of all religions, work experience, team games, subject clubs, and social service programme—all this can help in including the value of cooperation and mutual regard, honesty, and integrity, discipline and social responsibility. Children should practice and learn rituals, tradition, religion and activities as well as modernization should be simultaneously maintained.
- (vi) The teacher should cherish high human values in global context. He should develop faith in democratic, socialistic and secular values. He should relate value education to concrete situation so that a child can distinguish between lie, fantasy and truth. For instance, a child should understand the concept of property to make a sense that stealing is wrong.
- (vii) NGOs, and other social volunteer associations have to be strengthened to coordinate youth to bring stability among them and proper planning has to be introduced and implemented accordingly their potentialities.
- (viii) It is necessary to frame a bunch of moral standards. Educational institutions should shoulder this responsibility. Moral standards can be developed both through formal and non-formal systems. Organization of various activities such as NSS, NCC, Boys' Scouts and Girls' Guide can greatly help in this regard. Emphasis should be laid on the cultivation of suitable moral conducts and habits appropriate to modern living. This will result in successful adjustment to life situations.
- (ix) The commitment and responsibility of teachers is very essential to make the excellent teacher–student relationship and maintain peaceful school atmosphere. He should establish a sincere and friendly relation among the students to impart deliberate value education cautiously.
- (x) Value inculcation programme should be organized in schools time to time which includes group discussion on social problems field research, modelling, games, simulations, and role playing will instil or internalize certain values. Moral development approach, analysis approach and in depth self analysis exercise facilitate to find moral and logical reasoning and make scientific investigation to decide value issues and adopt values in life, interactive lessons on Conceptual Frame Work current issues, community services, participation in school governance, extracurricular activities, and simulation show will encourage civic and citizenship values among students. Social organizations should concentrate on value based moral character of the society and accordingly steps have to be taken to organize common people irrespective of age.
- (xi) Besides teachers parents and communities should be aware of the fact that youths should not indulge in antisocial activities. They should stay away from all sorts of evil effects of the society which may prevent them to fulfil their vision.

CONCLUSION:

In modern era ethical and moral values are degenerating. People are becoming self-centred. Indian youth are without any discipline and even they do not respect to their elders. It is very necessary for today's youth to understand the meaning of moral values deeply. If we want to make a crime free society, human values and professional ethics must be given due consideration. Morality is the most deterring factor of crime, antisocial behaviour, terrorism, assault, cyber crime, corruption etc. It is very imperative to find out the major causes of decline of morality in the society. Moral principles held the world together. So there is a set of need of moral principles and values to be imparted in children to make them a better and responsible citizen. Moral orientation of youths needs to be strengthened to build up a moral and harmonious society. In this connection we must remember the quotes of Mahatma Gandhi—"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated".

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